

May 18, 1983

LB 356

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Cullan.

SENATOR CULLAN: Yes, Mr. President.

SENATOR WIITALA: Senator Cullan, could you explain what the intent of the definition of the word "restoration" or the paragraph that refers to "restoration" concerning your uranium mining bill, just precisely what are the terms, conditions for restoring the quality of water in particular when a in situ uranium mining process has taken place?

SENATOR CULLAN: Yes, I will, Senator Wiitala, and I appreciate the opportunity to make clear for the legislative record the legislative intent with respect to the definition of "restoration". The intent of the definition is to provide assurance that no person will be permitted to degrade water quality by uranium operations unless the water will be returned to its original condition. The language is not intended to require that every parameter of pre-mining water quality be reproduced after operations cease. Rather the language is meant to require the degradation remains after operations be cut to a minimum. The requirement to restore groundwater in the bill would be considered unsatisfied if after uranium operations ended an aquifer was unsuitable for uses for which it was suitable before the mining operations began or if the post mining water quality was worsened more than an insignificant amount. At general file, the definition of "restoration" required that the aquifers be restored to their original condition. That language was modified to accord some flexibility to uranium miners. It is our intent that the substituted definition now in the bill grant that flexibility while maintaining the concept of the earlier provision.

SENATOR WIITALA: Senator Cullan, I wish to thank you for for clarifying that language. I would like to say that I have been behind from the beginning LB 356 and I would encourage the body to readvance it to Final Reading. Thank you.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Clark.

SENATOR CLARK: I would like to ask Senator Cullan a question, too.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Cullan.

SENATOR CLARK: When you said the water has to be returned to the same condition, are you talking about temperature also? Do they have to heat that water back up?